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# War and The Family

BY WILLARD WALLER

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# War and The Family

WILLARD WALLER
*Associate Professor of Sociology*
*Barnard College*

THE DRYDEN PRESS
*New York*

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103 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WAR AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

THE MORES OF THE FAMILY

WAR AND THE POPULATION

DISLOCATIONS OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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# War and The Family

When war begins, millions of men and women must give up their ingrained habits of living together; the men to face the soldier's fate, and their wives and children to take up new lives and unaccustomed tasks outside the home. Habits of family living give way; the morality of the family crumbles. The changes induced by war do not cease to be important when peace is declared; for the family can never be restored to the *status quo ante bellum.*

## WAR AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

What war does to the family is a part of the larger picture of what it does to society in general. Many of the war-time changes in the family result from pressures which originate in other institutions. Before paying particular attention to the effects of war on the family, we should perhaps pass briefly in review these other aspects of the subject.

The effects of war upon economic institutions are understood quite well in a general way, and many volumes have been written about them. A mechanized modern army has an insatiable appetite; it wants men but, even more, it requires machines and supplies, airplanes, tanks, guns, gasoline, concrete; all that is brought to it it devours. In order to supply the army the entire population must give itself over to unremitting toil; every man, woman, and child must make his contribution; every acre of ground must give up its tribute. The formula is that the entire economic resources of the nation must be mobilized for the conflict—a florid phrase with which to conceal the shifts by which individuals manage to live while a war is going on!

When war begins, a great portion of the flow of goods and services by which the population lives must be diverted to the needs of war,

sometimes as much as fifty per cent of the national income. There must be a rapid readjustment of industry; war industries must be quickly expanded while luxury industries and the production of most of the things which go to make the more abundant life must be contracted or discontinued. In the early period of a war there is usually widespread unemployment, caused by the drop in luxury industries, the discharge of servants by employers who can no longer afford them, and other readjustments of the industrial machine. This situation soon gives way to a labor shortage, a situation in which there is much work to do and not enough hands to do it.

Since a greatly increased proportion of the national income must now flow through governmental channels, the government must raise money, or credit. The necessary funds are usually secured through taxation, loans, and inflation. Taxation is undoubtedly the soundest means of financing a war, and there are usually steep increases in taxes. Taxes never suffice, however, to defray more than a part of the costs of a war, and the government must therefore resort to loans, and, ultimately, to inflation. Domestic loans are often justified as a means of postponing the burden of a war, but they usually do not operate that way in fact; they merely shift the burden from one class to another, they do not postpone it. Foreign loans actually postpone the burden of war. Loans rapidly degenerate into inflation, which brings with it a multitude of other effects. Inflation impoverishes the many, but the war-time boom which attends it makes a few persons wealthy. If it is carried very far, inflation ruins the middle classes of society. During a war there is a rapid loss of capital. Manufacturing plants deteriorate; houses fall into disrepair; farmers "live on their fences." Thus does the government squeeze from the people their tribute to Mars.

The end of the war finds the nation greatly impoverished. Much of the national wealth has been wasted; the productive machine has been seriously damaged. The interest burden on the national debt is severe. Nevertheless, the wheels of industry begin to turn somehow; the waste of capital in war and the postponement of consumption produce a condition of great scarcity by the end of the war, and there is usually a post-war boom during which the ravages of war are partially repaired. This may be accompanied by further inflation, which may get out of control during the post-war period. There must, of course, be an ultimate deflation, with all its hardships of readjustment. Overexpanded industries must be contracted again. Marginal coal mines

cease operations. Prairie lands blow away in the dust. Marginal workers rot in idleness.

The war-time evolution of the state is similarly well-known. In war the state expands almost infinitely. It appropriates to its martial purposes a great share of the national income. It rigidly controls the entire economic process; to this end there is a vast spawning of new agencies. The list of war-time agencies utilized by the British in the years 1914-1918 runs to some 300 pages, and there was a similar plethora of such agencies in other warring countries. In the United States the work of regimenting industry was ably performed by the War Industries Board; interestingly enough, there was a very slender legal basis for many of its activities.[1] The formal agencies of the state are supplemented in war time by thousands of informal organizations which control the citizens by appeals to patriotism and countless varieties of other social pressures.

The expansion of state power is attended by important changes in the structure of the state itself. In general, the executive branch of the government acquires many new powers, while the legislative branch loses much of its authority. Party struggles are usually suspended, by coalition, truce, or some other device. The imperatives of war demand quick decisions and courageous action; they also compel a measure of secrecy; in such an atmosphere democratic processes of government do not flourish. The gain in promptness and decisiveness of action is often bought at the expense of deliberation and consideration, so that measures are adopted and put into practice which in saner times would be defeated. In an emergency the war-time government acts promptly enough, but unfortunately not always with as much wisdom as speed.

It is well known that civil liberties perish in war time. Many of the safeguards of individual liberties are temporarily superseded; the writ of *habeas corpus,* for example, may be suspended, making arbitrary imprisonment once more possible. The right of free speech is necessarily greatly abridged, and the political activities by means of which the liberties of the people are usually defended are rigidly limited in their operation. The curtailment of civil liberties is a part of the general trend toward dictatorship in war time.

[1] The rapid expansion of governmental agencies was lampooned in a bit of doggerel circulated as a motto for President Wilson:

> "Count that day lost whose low-descending sun,
> Leaves nothing new for McAdoo to run."

Reform movements in and out of the government generally die a natural death at the beginning of a war, if not, indeed, at some earlier point in the process. This was the case with the widespread program of reform which Woodrow Wilson blocked out in his first term, and there are those who say that the Roosevelt New Deal died at about the time when the European situation became really threatening. Certain reforms, of course, receive a great acceleration from war; those which are considered useful or necessary as a means of winning the war. Prohibition, for example, received a great impetus from the war of 1914-1918, and in America the struggle against prostitution was similarly facilitated. Apparently the status of oppressed minorities or underprivileged groups is greatly improved by war. No doubt many of these gains are only temporary. The gains of women between 1914 and 1918 were apparently quite permanent.

As social life comes under the control of the state, all of life acquires a sort of quasi-military tone. Everyone is in some sense and degree under orders; everyone therefore loses some of his sense of autonomy and moral responsibility. Everyone is doing his duty by the largest social unit, the state, and in consequence duty in some other aspects is less rigidly enforced. The entire moral tone of society readjusts to the expansion of state power and to the changes of the pattern of life resulting from this expansion.

The changes in the pattern of community life in war time are no less significant than the other changes so far described. There is a vast enhancement of the sense of solidarity in the larger community, the nation. People become keenly aware of national sentiment; patriotism assumes almost pathological proportions. Smaller communities are swallowed up in the national effort; they become decidedly secondary, but at the same time there is increased community sentiment. The community feeling in America lasted for a few years after the World War of 1914-1918, and resulted in a few permanent monuments. It will not do, of course, to think of the effects of war upon communities only in terms of sentiment. There are other very concrete effects. Communities lose many residents and receive great infusions of new blood; new industries come in; internal migrations move populations endlessly; there are many refugees; there is a loss of medical and other services. Life in the community becomes unsettled.

The changed status of the church and the school is in some part a result of what happens to communities. Ordinarily these institutions

perform their functions in a sort of stagnant backwater, untouched by the main currents of social change. When the nation must organize the smaller communities for the purposes of war, the church and the school are ready to hand for that purpose. Teachers, especially those in administrative positions, immediately become community leaders. Much of the propaganda of the nation filters through the schools; children are mobilized to help sell bonds, to distribute information concerning the newest and latest thing that the government wants the people to do, to canvass for the Red Cross. At the same time that it undergoes this rapid evolution of function, the school often loses much of its personnel. Colleges naturally operate at a low ebb, if indeed they do not become part of the actual machinery of war. Inflation plays havoc with teachers' salaries, and the enhanced vocational opportunities of war attract many of the ablest members away from the profession. Since the tasks of the school must be performed somehow, standards of qualifications suffer. The schools do not even in the most favorable case return to normal for a number of years. It goes without saying that in the areas where the tide of war actually rolls, educational activities are at a standstill.

The activities of the church are similarly metamorphosed by war. Christianity is in theory a pacific religion, and one which makes much of such commandments as "Thou shalt not kill" and "Love thy neighbor as thyself." In war time these commandments are suspended. It becomes the task of the divines to rationalize the slaughter, which most of them do to perfection. In addition, the clergy co-operates in the same way as do school-teachers in organizing local communities in accordance with the national plan.

There is a sort of double thrust of social change in war time. Normally institutions maintain a certain equilibrium because the underlying conditions of life change slowly and because each institution is closely interwoven with all the others. In the stable community, the claims of economic interest, civic obligation, familial affection, and religious duty are not very often in conflict; in family life, for example, it seems that there is nothing which one does for love that is not his duty also. In war time this equilibrium is shattered. Every institution changes because the basic conditions of its existence have been altered; business men can no longer make a living in the accustomed way, preachers and teachers must change their routines, and families can no longer live together in the age-old way. Again, every institution must

change because every other is changing; the state makes new demands upon business and upon the school, business enforces certain changes in the family, and so on.

In this manner war transforms society. Every institution suffers a temporary metamorphosis; after the war the pendulum may swing back in some respects, but the pre-war equilibrium is never quite restored.

The family is caught up in this flux of things, and changes quite as much as any other institution. Unhappily enough, the effects of war upon the family have received little attention in the past, far less than has been paid to other institutions. It is the purpose of the present essay to remedy this situation in small part.

## THE MORES OF THE FAMILY

Since Sumner's time, sociologists have been inclined to stress very greatly the fundamental customs by which men live, the *mores* which are the source of all conceptions of right and wrong. There may be great changes in all the externals of life, or new social schemes, as in a revolution, which presume to change the whole round of life of a people, but unless the customs of the mass of men are changed things will soon go back to their usual course. When the mores change, all the other arrangements of society must follow.

Precisely because they are the customs of the mass of men, the mores must ordinarily change slowly. They cannot be changed by executive fiat or by dogma. During the French Revolution, an attempt was made to produce sweeping changes in the mores of the French people, but in the end the Bourbons returned, having learned nothing and forgotten nothing. This is not to say, of course, that the revolution and the decades of social violence which followed it accomplished nothing, but merely that the mores displayed great powers of resistance. After the American Civil War, there was an attempt to reform the pattern of race relations suddenly, but it was found in the end that only slow processes would work.

The mores are the principal magistrate of mankind. Despots and dictators are powerless to effect any really fundamental changes in the mores. The mores set limits to what can be accomplished in any given situation by propaganda. Ordinarily, as has been said, the mores change slowly, but in war time they change rapidly. Many of the character-

istics of the mentality of the war and post-war periods derive from the impact of war upon the mores.

All of the mores, naturally, change in somewhat different ways in war time, but it seems accurate enough to say that they are, in general, weakened. If one attempted to describe war-time changes in the mores in a single formula, the formula might perhaps run about as follows: In war the mores in general decay, and are replaced by hedonistic life adjustments on a short-term basis. The mores of patriotism constitute an apparent exception, and there are other moral changes, such as the accentuation of in-group humanitarianism and the improvement in the status of minority groups, which do not fit the formula, but the formula seems to cover a wide range of other cases. Decay is particularly apparent among the mores which have to do with the family.

A number of causes co-operate to change the mores during a war. A most important cause of change is that the basic conditions of life are changed; since the mores are always an adaptation to the basic conditions of life, they must be altered correspondingly. Some notable changes in the basic conditions of life are the following: Millions of families are broken up by conscription, evacuation, or death. Many millions of persons change their occupations; women and children must often work outside the home. The standard of living tumbles. Communities are on the boil. New situations arise which call for new folkways, and, ultimately, for new moral codes. Blackouts have already at the time of writing greatly altered the folkways in European capitals. If air-raids begin in dead earnest, they will certainly force sweeping moral readjustments.

A further cause of moral change in war time is the interruption of all settled habits of living. One may argue that the mores owe their very existence to the interweaving of individual habits, and whatever we may say of the origin of the mores, it is certainly true that the strength of their hold at any given moment is explicable in some such way. Habits formed in the setting furnished by the habits of others, habits which in themselves constitute long-term adjustments, moralities which take the long view of life, storing up the credit and sometimes sacrificing cash—these are truly the enormous fly-wheel of society, and in times of peace they function to keep life moving in its accustomed manner. When war begins, the habits of some millions of persons are broken; nearly everyone must stop doing what he has been doing and start doing something else. The result is that in thousands of new situ-

ations the old habits exert no control over behavior, and many adjustments are made entirely outside the mores.

Closely associated with the above is the emancipation of people from the small, primary groups and the communities in which they ordinarily live. Such primary groups as the family, the work group, and the religious groups ordinarily function as the watch-dogs of morality, and if any one of them is derelict in his duty, there are other agencies of the community ready to step in. Gossips narrowly observe their neighbors' behavior, and the strong voice of Mrs. Grundy keeps people more or less in line. War takes large sections of the population away from their homes and their local communities; it stirs up populations as one stirs soup; people are thrown together who have never seen one another before and will never see one another again; regions, culture groups, religious groups, and classes are all mixed as they are at no other period in life. At the same time, people are unable to satisfy their primal needs in the usual way. Millions of men are pulled out of the family and compelled to live with other men; millions of women are similarly taken out of their customary places; there could be no other result than unconventional behavior.

There are also special groups, such as soldiers, refugees, and ruined persons, whose influence is all in the direction of a changed or at least a damaged morality. The morality of the soldier has apparently always been a peculiar one. By common consent much of conventional morality is relaxed for him; he is not held to a high standard of respect for property, and he is expected to cultivate a few vices; above all, he is not expected to observe the conventional sex morality. In return for these concessions, the soldier must be brave and loyal and obedient.

In seeking to explain the peculiar morality of the soldier, we must take cognizance of the following facts: The soldier lives in a one-sex group, away from his own community and out of touch with the women whom he knows and who know him. The soldier has given up, or had taken from him, all responsibility for the conduct of his own life; he is under orders; it is not up to him to plan his life or to reason why, he must merely obey orders and live or die in accordance with the destiny that does or does not bring a bullet in his direction. The soldier's personal autonomy has been destroyed, and this saps his feeling of moral responsibility, because moral responsibility presupposes autonomy. Again, the strict regimentation of life in the army necessitates release in some other department of life, and that release is

found in the relaxation of conventional morality, particularly in the field of sex. Finally, the soldier develops a sort of last-fling psychology which characterizes his behavior when off duty. Any day may be his last; he may soon be an inanimate object incapable of enjoying wine, women, or song, and he feels that he must make the most of all his opportunities.[2]

In a number of ways the civilian population co-operates with the soldier in undermining morality. Many of the influences operating upon the soldier affect the civilian also in lesser degree: The interruption of habits, some loss of autonomy, and the formation of many new contacts. In addition, women acquire a certain attitude toward the man in uniform which results in much sexual license. There is one further factor: The common soldier is thrown pretty much with the lowest elements of the population, the groups where contacts may be made most easily and morality is most relaxed. It is true that there is great theoretical respect for the service, but it is also true that few genteel people are willing to throw their homes open to soldiers, and for this reason the soldier must consort with other groups.[3] In sum, it must be said that the relaxation of the morality of the family among soldiers and in the civilian population as a result of the influence of soldiers is beyond question.

Certain other groups are perhaps even more dangerous to conventional morality than is the soldier. Every major war produces some millions of refugees, and some millions of others who, if not actually displaced from their homes, are effectively and finally ruined. Such persons no longer have much of a stake in the moral order; they are disillusioned; they are footloose and free. Sometimes poverty forces their women into prostitution. In any case such persons have a great effect upon morality.

The relaxation of family morality during a war is evident to anyone

[2] For a more extensive discussion of soldier morality, see the essay "War and Social Institutions," by Willard Waller, in *War in the Twentieth Century,* edited by Willard Waller, The Dryden Press, 1940, pp. 478-532.

[3] The statement that the service man is effectively turned over to the lowest elements in the population has sometimes been questioned. In the opinion of the writer, it can be amply validated. It is interesting to quote one opinion by a keen observer of the 1917-1918 period. "As the situation stands today we have to confess that the influences bearing on a sailor's actions and weaving the fiber of his character, outside of the strictly military life, are mostly vicious and emanate from the lowest class in the civilian population." (J. S. Taylor, "The Social Status of the Sailor," *Social Hygiene,* Vol. IV, 1918, pp. 157-178.)

who sets foot on the streets of a nation at war. It is difficult, however, to find any formal index of the extent of such changes. Prostitution certainly increases greatly during a war, but very likely other forms of unconventional unions increase much more. In the United States, a great attempt was made in the years 1917-1918 to suppress prostitution. The American soldier was supposed to be completely continent. One section of the Selective Service Act of 1917 gave special powers to the Secretary of War to suppress prostitution in the vicinity of army posts and training camps. The anti-prostitution campaign was pushed with the greatest possible vigor. Within a year after our entry into the war, red-light districts in nearly eighty American cities had been closed.[4] Unlike most reform movements, the campaign against prostitution prospered, because it could be identified with the purpose of winning the war.

In the earlier period of the war, the suppression of prostitution met with some success. It by no means follows that sexual expression was denied to the soldiers and sailors. In 1918 The Committee of Fourteen reported that "During the winter of 1917-1918 the repression of vice temptation to men in service has become increasingly difficult." In addition, the problem of non-commercial immorality grew by leaps and bounds; "Charity girls," to use a phrase then current, became very numerous, and various devices were adopted to deal with them, probably without much success. A commentary on the esthetic and emotional level of the sexual activities of men in the service is furnished by figures showing the distribution of 5,103 prophylactic treatments by the number of hours after exposure: Of this group 1,180 presented themselves for prophylaxis within one hour after exposure, 1,172 in the second hour, and 521 in the succeeding hour.[5] The reader may draw his own conclusions as to the degree of emotional involvement probably existing in such relationships.

Among the changes in the moral equilibrium produced by war, some would meet the approval of most students of human welfare. The changed consensus concerning prostitution would be counted a

[4] For the story of the suppression of vice, see T. N. Pfeiffer, "Social Hygiene and the War," *Social Hygiene,* Vol. IV, 1918, pp. 417-431. See also M. J. Exner, "Prostitution in Its Relation to the Army on the Mexican Border," *Social Hygiene,* Vol. III, 1917, pp. 205-220.

[5] Edith Houghton Hooker, "A Criticism of Venereal Prophylaxis," *Social Hygiene,* Vol. IV, 1918, pp. 179-195. Only the figures cited are taken from this author. Her use of them is very different from that of the present writer.

gain by most persons, though there are some who would regard the accompanying relaxation in behavior in all classes as a more than corresponding loss. Anyone inclined to regard the prostitute as a "priestess blasted for the sins of the people" would have to regard the case as doubtful.[6] The case of prohibition is even more doubtful, but since that issue does not directly concern the family mores, it need not delay us here. The success of the cause of woman's rights is something of which almost everyone concerned with social welfare would approve.

Another very important improvement in the family mores of the United States as a result of the war has received all too little attention; we refer to the changed attitude toward venereal diseases. If we have at the present writing all but reached the point where venereal disease will cease to be a social problem and become a medical problem only, it is in considerable part because of the progress made during the war in breaking down the "hush-hush" attitude toward these diseases.[7]

[6] Parenthetically, and just to keep the record clear, the present writer regards the diminution in prostitution as a clear gain.

[7] Cf. Harvey J. Locke, *Social Aspects of Syphilis,* 1938, published by the Indiana State Board of Health. In this valuable study Locke draws the picture of a slow accumulation of changes up to the World War, a relatively great advance at that time, a slowing down but continuing cumulation after the war, and on the foundation of these accumulated changes an apparent radical modification of attitudes in the decade of the 'thirties. It is interesting to note that the campaign against syphilis persisted for some years after the war and probably even gained momentum for a time. Locke notes that "twenty-two million pamphlets were distributed by the Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board in the two years of 1919 and 1920. The American Association for the Study and Prevention of Infant Mortality advocated the compulsory placing of placards in all public toilets and advertising in newspapers by state boards of health. The Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo, who was also Director General of the Railways, had placards on venereal diseases placed in Pullman washrooms, railway shops, and in every place which his influence could reach. During 1919 and 1920 twenty thousand lectures were given by physicians or men furnished by the Public Health Service. More than 2,000 health exhibits and lantern slides were shown in 1919, and more than 11,000 in 1920. Motion picture films were distributed to practically all the state boards of health of the country and also to the health agencies of many foreign countries. In 1919 the American Social Hygiene Association sent 'educational material' to the nation's physicians, dentists and druggists, urging them to cooperate in the national venereal disease control program. Eighty per cent of the members of the National Retail Druggists Association, or 28,226 druggists, agreed not to prescribe treatment or to recommend patent medicine remedies to venereal diseased persons. A campaign was waged against the advertising quack by requesting 20,000 newspapers to refuse advertising space to such persons, and all but 200 agreed not to publish quack advertising." (Locke, *op. cit.,* p. 42.) There was naturally some recession from this point as a result of the persistence of traditional attitudes, but there can be little doubt that the groundwork for later fundamental changes was laid in the war period and just after.

It is probable that the entire social-hygiene movement (however that movement be defined) was facilitated by the war, although it may have suffered somewhat in the post-war period by its military associations.[8]

First and last, Hitler's Reich has had much to do with the moral changes of war. In the post-war period, German morality was extremely disorganized. All vices were tolerated. Family life was at a low ebb. The birth-rate was vanishing. One source of appeal of Nazi propaganda was a reaction to the immorality of the period. But the greed of the Nazi war machine for cannon fodder soon led to changes in morality unusual even in war time and extreme even for the Nazis. Long-distance weddings between war brides and soldiers at the front were legalized. And on December 23, 1939, Heinrich Himmler made an open bid for illegitimate children, saying, "Beyond the limits of bourgeois laws and customs which ordinarily are probably necessary, it can become an exalted task even outside of wedlock for German women and girls of good blood to become—not frivolously but imbued with deepest moral concern—mothers of children begotten by soldiers moving to the front without knowing whether they will return or die for the Fatherland." He recalled the "ancient saying that only he can die peacefully who has sons and children," and promised that "Special sponsors will be appointed by me for all children of good blood born in or out of wedlock whose fathers fall in the war."[9] This proposal stirred up some opposition on the part of religious authorities. It was then proposed that some of these babies should be secured by artificial impregnation, thus extending the use of *Ersatz* products to the field of human life.

[8] It is interesting to note that Thomas D. Eliot warned of this possibility in 1917: "Let not social hygiene be too exclusively associated with war and military efficiency, lest it impair its opportunity to influence and protect the normal family after war is over." (Thomas D. Eliot, "Possible Effects of War Upon the Future of the Social Hygiene Movement," *Social Hygiene,* Vol. IV, 1918, pp. 219-223.)

[9] These statements are taken from an article in *The New York Times* of December 24, 1939. It would seem that attacks upon the monogamous family could hardly go further than these German experiments, but *The New York World-Telegram* of February 6, 1940, carries an atrocity story of the Sino-Japanese war which is much more extreme. According to Dr. Walter H. Judd, a medical missionary to China, the Japanese are systematically employing rape of Chinese women as a means of breaking Chinese resistance. If the last war taught us anything, it is that such atrocity stories must be checked and double-checked before being accepted, and the present writer has not been able to verify the story. If, however, it is true, it represents an extreme example of an attack upon the family mores of a people.

The confusion of morality produced by war probably reaches its height in the post-war period. The old mores persist, along with new mores produced by the war and nascent attempts at adjustment of the mores to the changed conditions produced by war; there is widespread disillusionment, grinding poverty, and a crushing task of reconstruction; the generation comes of age which grew up under war-time conditions. It is a period of hysteria and frenetic gaiety. Since this topic will be dealt with separately, it need only be mentioned here.

One other point deserves at least passing notice. It is the burden of a great deal of the book to which this essay is intended to serve as a supplement that the mores of the family stand in considerable need of adaptation to the changed conditions of life. One might argue that the alterations of the mores produced by war are therefore to be interpreted in a quite desirable light, as needed changes which emerge under the pressure of war-time conditions. Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case with most war-time changes of mores. They are largely destructive, and represent decay of the old mores without the emergence of new ones. Where the changes are adaptive, they represent adaptations to war-time conditions rather than the normal conditions of peace. In any case, the changes come too rapidly for the human organism to assimilate. If one thinks of war-time changes of the mores in terms of mental hygiene, he must see them as imposing upon the individual a burden of adjustment almost too great to bear. But we surely do not need to labor the point further in order to establish the demoralizing effect of war.

## WAR AND THE POPULATION

Some of the more obvious effects of war on the family are those which have to do with the population. War decimates the population, killing many men in battle and a comparable number of civilians by disease. It greatly reduces the birth-rate, and usually increases infantile mortality. It leaves a nation with a sick population, the age and sex ratios being badly distorted; this in turn has profound effects upon the mores of the family. We shall now consider some of these effects in more detail.

The casualty figures of the World War of 1914-1918 are so well known that they hardly need to be repeated here. There were at least ten million known dead, and another three million presumed dead.

We have grown accustomed to repeating these almost astronomical sums glibly; perhaps an astronomical comparison will help us; if we took the lower figure of ten million, and spaced these dead men evenly between the earth and the moon, there would be more than forty corpses to the mile. It is interesting to reflect that nearly every one of these deaths brought sorrow to someone; even the humblest left wives or children or parents or sweethearts; nearly everybody's death disorganized at least one family.

The list of battle-deaths is, however, only a part of the story, not more than half of it, for a certainty. Any major war is likely to cause as many deaths among civilians as among soldiers. Every great war produces its epidemics. Typhus fever, bubonic plague, cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, small-pox, and scurvy are known as "war epidemics." Venereal disease, though not epidemic, has had a long military record, and tuberculosis always gains as a result of war-time living conditions.

According to the most conservative estimates, as many persons died of war diseases in the years 1914-1918 as were killed in battle. There was an epidemic of typhus in Serbia in 1914, another in Serbia, Greece, Rumania, and Poland toward the end of the war. There was a great increase in malaria and typhoid in regions where these diseases are endemic, and there was a vast increase of tuberculosis throughout Europe, starvation enabling it to assume more malignant forms than usual. Infant mortality increased greatly, the while the birth-rate fell sharply. All these things, however, were but the prologue to the great plague of that particular war, the influenza, which appeared suddenly, somehow became epidemic, and swept over the entire world. The total number of deaths from influenza cannot even be estimated, but the guesses vary from six to twelve million. It is important to realize that such epidemics do not usually confine themselves to the warring nations.

War produces a great temporary decrease in the birth-rate. The effects of the War of 1914-1918 may be shown by comparing the population figures for the last pre-war and the first post-war censuses. The following table contains relevant information for a number of European countries:

AGES AND PERCENTS

| Country | Census Years | 0-5 Number | Per-cent | 5-9 Number | Per-cent | 10-14 Number | Per-cent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Germany | 1910 | 7,791,000 | 12 | 7,398,000 | 11.4 | 6,920,000 | 10.7 |
| | 1919 | 3,821,000 | 6.3 | 6,544,000 | 10.8 | 6,831,000 | 11.3 |
| England and Wales | 1911 | 3,854,000 | 10.7 | 3,697,000 | 10.3 | 3,500,000 | 9.7 |
| | 1921 | 3,322,000 | 8.8 | 3,519,000 | 9.3 | 3,660,000 | 9.7 |
| France | 1911 | 3,471,000 | 8.9 | 3,325,000 | 8.5 | 3,298,000 | 8.4 |
| | 1921 | 2,398,000 | 6.2 | 3,001,000 | 7.7 | 3,406,000 | 8.8 |

Obviously war produces a great temporary shortage of births. It is difficult to tell how lasting this effect is, because the birth-rate has been falling throughout Europe for some time. Comparison of war-time and post-war birth-rates shows that there was a considerable recovery of the birth-rate after the war, but does not exclude the possibility that the war may have accelerated the long-term trend. It is certain also that the birth-rate does not wholly recover immediately after a war, but continues for some time to reflect the moral and economic conditions of the post-war period.

EUROPEAN BIRTH-RATES (PER 1,000)

| Country | 1905-1909 | 1920-1924 | 1925 |
|---|---|---|---|
| England and Wales | 26.7 | 21.3 | 18.3 |
| Germany | 32.3 | 23.1 | 20.6 |
| France | 20.1 | 20.1 | 19.1 |

The German situation was perhaps most extreme, and the German rate fell rapidly until in 1933 it reached a low point of 14.7. There was some recovery under Hitler, but the proposals already referred to demonstrate how seriously the situation is now regarded. The disturbance of the French population was so severe that in 1934 there began to be a shortage of soldiers, and the period of service had to be extended. It is now commonly recognized that France faces a period of declining man-power.

That this decline of the birth-rate is not limited to Occidental cultures is attested by the fact that the Japanese birth-rate has declined

sharply as a result of Japan's military adventure in China. It is estimated that 304,319 fewer babies were born in Japan in 1938 than in 1937 and that the net increase in the population dropped from 1,000,000 annually to 668,516.[10]

Even more important in its moral consequences was the disturbance of the sex ratio in warring nations. This is shown by the following tables compiled from the first post-war census in each nation.

DISTURBED SEX RATIO [11]

GERMANY (1919)

| | *Men* | *Women* | *Surplus of Women* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20-24 | 2,390,000 | 3,018,000 | 628,000 |
| 25-29 | 2,004,000 | 2,693,000 | 689,000 |
| 30-39 | 3,888,000 | 4,592,000 | 704,000 |
| 40-49 | 3,637,000 | 3,830,000 | 193,000 |
| Total surplus | | | 2,214,000 |

German figures do not include some 400,000 prisoners of war not yet repatriated.

FRANCE (1921)

| | *Men* | *Women* | *Surplus of Women* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20-24 | 1,405,000 | 1,642,000 | 237,000 |
| 25-29 | 1,231,000 | 1,553,000 | 322,000 |
| 30-39 | 2,524,000 | 3,007,000 | 483,000 |
| 40-49 | 2,585,000 | 2,770,000 | 185,000 |
| Total surplus | | | 1,227,000 |

ENGLAND AND WALES (1921)

| | *Men* | *Women* | *Surplus of Women* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20-24 | 1,448,000 | 1,703,000 | 255,000 |
| 25-29 | 1,340,000 | 1,620,000 | 280,000 |
| 30-39 | 2,555,000 | 2,992,000 | 437,000 |
| 40-49 | 2,385,000 | 2,622,000 | 237,000 |
| Total surplus | | | 1,209,000 |

[10] *The New York Times,* July 13, 1939.

[11] Statistics from the League of Nations, *International Statistical Year Book, 1926-1928.*

These figures require very little interpretation. It should be noted that some surplus of females is normal in European populations, but of course nothing like the surplus shown by these tables. On the basis of the census of 1919 and before the return of some prisoners of war, there were about two million extra women in Germany in the twenty-to-forty age group. There were approximately five women for every four men in this group. In France the situation was similar; here there were approximately one million extra women in the twenty-to-forty age group, or about six women to every five men—this on the basis of a census of 1921, when some recovery had been made, and there were no prisoners of war to be returned. In England and Wales there were also about a million extra women between the ages of twenty and forty, or approximately one extra woman for every five men.

Appalling as these figures are, they merely begin to give the picture. Some millions of women in European countries were excluded from monogamous marriage because their mates or prospective mates were dead. We must remember also that of those who survived many were to some extent disqualified for normal family life and earning a living owing to disabilities. Bogart estimates the number of men alive at the end of the war but totally incapable of self-support at 629,244.[12] He estimates the number of those with reduced ability at 10,554,726, a number almost equal to those killed in the war. We must also remember that of the men alive at the end of the war an abnormally high proportion was composed of persons unfit for the service for medical or other reasons. In addition to all this, there was an unascertainable number of men physically capable of marriage and self-support, but psychically injured by the war. Taking all of these things into consideration, one is forced to believe that a woman's chances of a normal and happy marriage at the end of the war were unusually small.

What were the effects of this disturbed sex ratio? They were exactly what one might be led, on *a priori* grounds, to expect, and the social history of the 'twenties takes its tone to a considerable extent from the effects of the disparity of the sexes. The bargaining power of the

[12] E. L. Bogart, *Direct and Indirect Costs of the Great World War,* A Publication of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York, 1919, p. 274.

On the basis of official figures given in *The Consequences of the War to Great Britain* (Francis W. Hirst, Carnegie Endowment, 1934, p. 299) it appears that nearly 100,000 English suffered serious disabilities: 39,000 lost limbs, 2,100 were totally blinded, 6,187 lost their reason, 4,060 became epileptics, and 42,000 contracted tuberculosis.

woman was greatly reduced. Many millions of women lived outside the mores, claiming the right to take their pleasure where they found it. Some women claimed the right to have children whether or not they were married. The period seethed with revolt. Homosexuality, especially female homosexuality, attained a considerable degree of toleration in many circles where it had formerly been strictly taboo. *The Well of Loneliness,* a novel which was essentially an apology for the female homosexual, had a great success. While most of these effects of the disturbed sex ratio slowly declined in intensity, they are still traceable today. There was in fact a "lost generation" of women whose problems were more severe than those of the men.[13]

### DISLOCATIONS OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

As previously noted, war entails a whole series of institutional dislocations, and disorganizes community life. We shall now deal with some of these in more detail and point out their relation to the family. On the economic side, war is usually attended by inflation. "Inflation" is a word which most of us use lightly, without conjuring up in the imagination any of its concrete effects. We begin to realize what inflation means when we think of what it does to particular families. When the state takes a man as a soldier, it makes a small allowance to his family, but this stipend is usually pitifully small; in all continental countries, the wives and children of soldiers must live at or near the subsistence level. When inflation is added, starvation is just around the corner. Millions of housewives are never able to buy quite enough food to keep their families from hunger, nor enough clothes or good enough clothes to keep out the cold, nor fuel enough to heat the house. The family unit of consumption must take up the strain of inflation.

In many other ways the family unit of organization takes up the strain of the economic dislocations of war. Where the family is still a productive unit, it absorbs the shock almost completely. When a peasant is called to the colors, his wife and children must usually do his work and their own too, and the production of food does not suffer greatly. In other families the wife works outside the home in order to support herself and her children, and again the work of the world somehow gets done.

[13] The problems of this generation of women are described in one of the best and most poignant of all the war books, Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth.*

Probably no modern nation could wage a war without its women. Women till the fields, work in factories, drive taxicabs and even airplanes, and do all but the roughest and heaviest tasks at the one extreme and occupy all but the most difficult and responsible fields at the other extreme. An English study by Irene Osgood Andrews describes the changes in the employment of women between 1914 and 1918.[14] The war produced a great increase in the employment of women, and also considerable shifting of that employment from one field to another. As a result of the dislocations of war, there was some unemployment of women in the early period. At the beginning of the war over a million women were unemployed or underemployed for a time. The pre-war level of employment was not reached until April, 1915. In July, 1917, the number of employed women had been increased by a million. During the war, women entered many fields for the first time; toward the end, there was no field to which they had not been admitted. In July, 1917, official estimates showed 1,392,000 women taking men's places. Women first entered the fields of transportation, retail trade, and clerical work. In the second year, they went into munitions, in the third year into many staple industries. There were corresponding declines in domestic service and other similar occupations and of course technological adjustments. In the summer of 1916 there was a marked increase in the number of female agricultural workers. These processes were attended by considerable relaxation of laws intended to protect the woman worker. By 1917, some 600,000 children under age had also been permitted to work.

The change in the work of women was paralleled by an astonishing alteration of their political status. The cause of woman's rights registered great and permanent gains during the years 1914-1918. The equality of the sexes is now so completely accepted that it is difficult for us to realize how recently it was established. In the years just before 1914 the English suffragettes were waging a desperate battle for those rights which women now take for granted. Militant suffragettes had become political criminals. They broke shop-windows, raised riots, burned empty buildings, hotels, and race-track stands. When they were arrested, they went on hunger strikes, feeling that the government would be forced by considerations of humanity to release them before they

[14] Irene Osgood Andrews, *Economic Effects of the War upon Women and Children in Great Britain,* A Publication of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1918.

starved. On Derby Day in 1913 one militant suicided under dramatic circumstances. There were a few bombs, mostly defective. One author lists six pages of crimes attributed to suffragettes in 1914. When the war came, the situation changed with miraculous suddenness. The controversy disappeared; women by the millions aided the national effort in various phases of war work. The labor shortage ended many useless disabilities and exclusions in the economic sphere; change of the mores ended many others. By 1917 a new consensus on woman's rights had evidently crystallized. Asquith, the old enemy of woman suffrage, now led the argument for it. It went into effect in 1918. A similar metamorphosis of the mores gave women the vote in the United States.

A different type of dislocation—and here the figure of speech becomes literal—is that of populations. War produces millions of refugees, persons fleeing from the war zone or from enemy rule. The War of 1914-1918 produced an estimated ten million refugees; the War of 1939 had in its first few months given rise to population movements of unparalleled magnitude. While refugees preserve some semblance of family life, and stick together in families or fragments of families, the mores of the family are largely shattered. The industrial dislocations of war may also occasion great internal migrations of persons who have almost the same effect upon the communities which receive them as do refugees. The hundreds of thousands of Negroes who moved northward in 1917 and 1918 disorganized both the South which lost them and the North which gained them.

The mobility of a typical community of a warring nation is well brought out in a recent study of Tours.[15] In 1911 Tours had a population of 73,398. When the war broke out, this French city became the crossroads of the world. First it lost its garrison of between 4,000 and 5,000 men, its conscripts, and most of its floating population of tourists and students, probably between 10,000 and 15,000 persons. Successive waves of refugees and evacuees inundated the city; many Parisians went through it in the early days of the war; then came Italians, Belgians, Serbs, and French from the invaded areas. The city soon became a concentration point for soldiers of several classes. Between 4,000 and 5,000 sick and wounded were cared for in Tours. In addition to French troops, Belgians and Americans were quartered there. In July, 1918, the mayor of the city estimated the population at 101,833.

[15] See Michel Lhéritier, *Tours et la guerre, étude économique et social,* A Publication of the Carnegie Endowment, 1926, especially pp. 1-5.

Other estimates placed the population as high as 130,000. At the same time that the population was thus expanding, the number of houses available for occupancy was decreased by the demands of the military machine. In August, 1918, numbers of persons were forced to sleep, in the expressive French phrase, *à la belle étoile*. Thus in a city well out of the war zone, conditions of life were so disorganized that people were living more or less like transients. It is obvious that a stable family life is not possible under such circumstances.

The extent of the disorganization of local communities by war can hardly be conceived unless one is confronted by the actual situation. In regions where the fighting occurs, community life and its controls are all but suspended: the life of the people is regulated by the iron rules of military dictatorship. There is interruption of all the normal institutional routines which serve to keep people in their places and at the stations which duty prescribes. The mores change; the authority of all established standards is undermined. Every social problem which the community has learned to cope with is changed; most of them become more pressing at the time when war is also urging its manifold demands. New industries spring up; old ones are greatly expanded. War orders bring thousands of workers to some communities where there have previously been hundreds. The age-and-sex composition of the population is altered by the introduction of some hundreds of women munitions workers or some thousands of soldiers in training. War industries sometimes create entirely new communities. War refugees may appear in such numbers that the task of housing and feeding them strains community resources. Internal migrations, such as the northward trek of American Negroes during the first World War, may give rise to immense community problems. The relations of social classes are disturbed by inflation, conscription, industrial dislocation, and war work. The community loses many of its leaders who are claimed by the nation for service in its war program. Many essential services are likely to be lacking when the need for them is greater than ever. This is true, for example, of medical services. The supply of doctors and nurses is limited, and when the military forces have satisfied their claims there are not enough physicians left to discharge the necessary functions. If medical mobilization is not carefully organized, it is likely to leave large areas without medical care. The fact that war brings epidemics makes the shortage of doctors and nurses particularly unfortunate.

The things mentioned above happened to American communities during the World War of 1914. In Europe the situation was much worse. A survey of a typical French community was made for the American Red Cross in 1918 by Mr. and Mrs. Basil de Selincourt.[16] The subject was a village with a population of 2,600, located at some distance from the scene of fighting. At the beginning of the war there were two factories, the larger of which employed 1,540 workers. Some 247 men were mobilized at the outset of the war and over a hundred more later. The smaller factory closed at once; the larger continued to operate short-handed. In 1918 it had a force of 1,010, of which 126 were refugees. The farms of the community continued to function, the families of the owners contriving somehow to keep them going. The cost of living increased some 200 per cent during the war. Potatoes increased to eight-and-a-half times their former price. Wages increased about 35 per cent.

Analysis of family budgets presented an even more discouraging picture. A workman who earned $7.20 a week before the war would have earned $9.60 in 1918, but the goods on his budget, which would have cost $7.17 in 1914, had risen to $25.63 in 1918. This disparity could be met only by drastic reduction of the standard of living. Some refugees came to the town in 1916 and 1917, but they totaled only 60 up to January 1, 1918. By July, 1918, there were 283 refugees and repatriates. Those who were able to do so found work in the factory; some lived on a small allowance from the government. Naturally, as the latest comers and the least economically able, they were forced to live in unsatisfactory quarters. There were two physicians, one too old for active practice; the other was responsible for all the population within a radius of twenty miles and in addition held an important public position. There were two military hospitals of sixty beds each. Refugees and repatriates received little medical care. The secretary to the mayor, a poorly paid government employee, was the link between the village and the nation. He did the work of administering the local government and in addition handled the complex and varied allowances made by the French government to individuals and families, to families of soldiers, widows, orphans, war cripples, heads of large families, refugees, and repatriates. In addition to this he administered the com-

[16] This summary is taken from *The Human Costs of the War,* by Homer Folks, Harper, 1920, pp. 152-167. Mrs. Basil de Selincourt is perhaps better known as Anne Douglas Sedgwick.

plicated food regulations. His salary augmented by the salaries of his wife and two children, amounted to about $600 a year. Studies of other French communities seemed to show that the conditions described were quite typical.

England's evacuation experiment in the War of 1939 may serve as an example of a well-justified and thoroughly desirable war measure which nevertheless strikes at the foundations of the family and the school. The failure of the experiment, to date, illustrated also how persistent and viable are the habits of living in family and community.

During the early days of the War of 1939, some 1,400,000 persons were removed from the great cities of England to rural areas in which it was hoped they might be safe from German bombers. In this number were included approximately 808,000 school children who were evacuated in small units with their teachers and classmates. There were included also 514,000 mothers and children below school age. About 100,000 babies were taken in nursery units. There was also a certain number of hospital cases. The entire scheme was voluntary as regarded the evacuees, but the reception of the evacuees in country areas was forced. The initial cost of the scheme, including preparation of quarters and transportation, was around £2,000,000. The estimated weekly cost of billeting the evacuees was £450,000. It does not seem too much to say that the evacuation of the cities was one of the most gigantic sociological experiments in history.

Once the scheme was put into effect, the fable of the city mice and the country mice began to be dramatized on a colossal scale. Letters to the London *Times,* unfailing register of British opinion, told of the clash of urban and rural mores. Many of the evacuees were welcome guests; many, perhaps most, were made comfortable in their new homes. But the conflict of standards of living and attitudes toward life was nevertheless severe. Some of the children were verminous; many were dirty. Many of the mothers missed the pubs, and the children missed the excitement of the city streets. The evacuees came largely from slum areas, and their knowledge of the amenities of life was necessarily limited.

There were many amusing incidents. One little boy had an old and greatly worn toothbrush which he refused to surrender; he was attached to it because it had belonged to his uncle. One excellent citizen rummaged about in his attic to locate some children's games for two anticipated little guests. After a boring session with parcheesi, domi-

noes, and snakes and ladders, the two boys asked their landlord for a deck of cards. The upshot of it was that the host had to borrow train fare for his next day's commuting.

The invasion of the privacy of the English home is undoubtedly one of the most significant aspects of the evacuation. For centuries it has been said that an Englishman's home is his castle. Compulsory blackouts and the billeting of evacuees altered this situation considerably. For the most part, the British public appears to have given cheerful co-operation. A few landowners refused to co-operate, and were fined approximately $125.

Once the city guests were installed in their country homes, some sort of trouble was likely. The country folk regarded the fees paid by the government as inadequate. For billeting a mother the weekly rate was set at about one dollar, with an extra sixty cents for each child with the mother. This does not include food. The mother was supposed to supply her own food and do her own cooking, with the result that she and her landlady were likely to get badly in each other's way. The dirty habits of many of the evacuated mothers caused no end of distress to careful housewives, and children caused some damage. It was found easier to take the evacuee out of the slum than to take the slum out of the evacuee.

On their side, the evacuated mothers had much reason to complain. The chief burden of adjustment to the new way of life fell on them. They had to care for themselves and their children under difficult conditions, and often in homes where they felt unwelcome. Prices of food were higher in the country than in the city. The mothers missed the conveniences and excitements of city life. They wondered what their husbands were doing, and hated to be away from them. A large percentage of the mothers returned to the city within a few weeks. They preferred the risk of air raids to country life. How large this percentage was there is no way of saying. Probably more than fifty per cent of the mothers returned to the cities within a few months. When evacuation was begun, four hundred and twenty-four Liverpool mothers and children were sent to a small village in Wales. Three weeks later all but fifty had returned to Liverpool.

As a result of the evacuation, a number of families have been completely broken. A train-caller in London had five children. One of them was in a hospital when war began and was sent to another hospital thirty miles south of London. Two other children went with their

school to the West Coast. A fourth went with his school to Devonshire. The fifth child and the mother were billeted in a village forty miles northwest of London. Thus the war scattered this one family over a large part of England. What the ultimate effect upon the family will be is a matter that certainly invites conjecture.

Included among the evacuees were more than 800,000 school children who made their rural adventure under the supervision of their teachers. This procedure involved taking these children away from their parents and placing them out in crude approximations of foster homes under the care of the schools, a momentous shift in control. There were innumerable problems. It was difficult to provide accommodations in the same locality for children belonging to a single school. Somewhat less than a hundred children from a school in Surrey were scattered through three parishes, being more than twenty miles apart in some cases. There were difficulties with water supply and sanitation; it was difficult to provide schoolrooms.

The psychic shock to these school children must have been considerable. Children's agencies in the United States spend an immense amount of time and effort on the placement of children in foster homes. It may easily happen that before a child is placed the social worker will pay several visits to the foster home, make a study of the child over a period of weeks, consult her colleagues and supervisors, and perhaps call in the psychiatrist and other experts. All this is done because experience has shown that a wide range of maladjustments may occur as a result of foster-home placements. The English authorities had to place 800,000 children in a very brief time. Such placements, whether in homes or institutions, would have to be on the basis of physical care only. Facts are lacking, and may never become available, but we may be sure that everything which can possibly happen to children has happened to some of the 800,000. At the same time it is probably true that most of the children adjusted reasonably well for the period of their stay in the country. In the case of the majority of normal children placed in normal homes, we may suppose there were no serious immediate problems. The long-term effects of such an experience are another matter.

From the point of view of the schools and the teachers, the task must have appeared almost insuperable. Schools are not flexible institutions, and teachers are likely to be rather limited and rigid in their outlook upon life. It is interesting to speculate as to what must have

gone on in the minds of these British teachers, who a few months before, perhaps, conducted bitter disputes as to the advisability of changing the arithmetic hour from eleven o'clock to ten-thirty, when suddenly they found themselves responsible for the welfare of their charges in school and out, when for once they had to care for the whole child and not merely for that part of the child that goes to school. The establishment of normal school-routines in the evacuation areas would necessarily be a matter of several months.

Many children did not leave the cities, or left only to return in a short time. It is estimated that about 2,000,000 children remained in the dangerous areas. When the schools were moved to the country, many of these children were deprived of the opportunity for education. In Paris, schools for such children were reopened on October 15, 1939.

Government officials admitted three serious mistakes in the evacuation procedure: (1) The failure to provide medical examination of the evacuees, (2) the sending of evacuees sometimes to places where there were no accommodations for them, and (3) the error of placing mothers with young children in private families. The actual physical procedure of evacuation was said to have been very well organized. As to the social side, it seems legitimate to wonder whether those who planned the evacuation really had any conception of the institutional and personal dislocations which the scheme involved. It seems certain that the long-term effects of such an experiment will be incalculably great.

It may be supposed that such experiences will result in the break-up of many families and the weakening of many more. After all, habit is the fly-wheel of society; it chains the clerk to his desk and keeps the miner in his cavern; and it is the final basis of family solidarity. When the men, women, and children who constitute the component parts of families contract habits of non-family living, it will be hard, terribly hard, to sort them out into families again.

The resistance to the evacuation procedure is highly significant as a measure of what it involves for the lives of human beings. Millions of parents preferred, for themselves and their children, the risk of bombing to the hardships of evacuation. In the early months of 1940, a second and better organized hegira was planned. It was then divulged that only 400,000 school children had remained in places of safety, which means that 400,000 had returned to the cities. When an attempt

was made to remove some 212,110 school children from London, the parents of 21,000 accepted the offer, those of another ten per cent definitely refused the offer, while eight per cent of the parents entirely ignored the government's appeal.[17]

### RELEASE OF SEXUAL IMPULSES

In many ways a war is like a masquerade. In fact war *is* a sort of gigantic masquerade, and this fact furnishes us our best clue to all the things that happen to the moralities by which men live. School teachers dress up in brilliant uniforms and become handsome young officers; business men strut and pose awhile as bureaucrats; the harmless postman becomes a hard-boiled sergeant; doctors of philosophy supervise the manufacture of munitions; an obscure garage mechanic or a praying hill-billy becomes a national hero; the housewife drives a taxi; everybody pretends, everybody moves out of his customary orbit, in order to win the war.

As in a carnival or masquerade, the sexual impulses of mankind are released in war. This powerful drive, as we know, is ordinarily kept in check and forced to do the work of the world by the most terrible inhibitions that the human mind is capable of absorbing, and the sexual expression of individuals is watched over by a whole series of institutions which punish deviations with Draconian severity. In war all this is changed; the habit systems of individuals are shattered and their morality is dissolved; institutions lose their power to keep human beings in line.

There is a great release of sexuality in conventional channels. The phenomenal rise in the marriage rate in the early period of a war is a familiar phase of war psychology. It occurred in the World War of 1914, and is to be found again in the War of 1939. A recent report from England states that marriages are taking place there at the rate of 40,000 a month, or approximately 500,000 a year.[18] Many of London's luxury hotels offer a special reduced rate to service men who marry on leave, and are becoming known as "honeymoon hotels." Similar phenomena are to be seen in Germany, where, of course, they are strongly encouraged by the government. On the basis of the War

[17] *The New York Times,* March 31, 1940.

[18] This rate should be compared with the normal rate of about 350,000 for England, Wales, and Scotland. (The figure for 1933 was 352,406.)

of 1914-1918, we may safely suppose that many of these marriages are premature and ill-advised, and some are entered upon for most trivial reasons.

The greatest increase of sexual behavior, however, is not in such conventional channels.[19] Wherever men and women meet, some of them join in illegitimate unions. In the front-line brothels, soldiers stand in line for hours in order to enjoy a few moments with a prostitute. In the resting-station brothels, there are more conveniences, but the entire atmosphere is scarcely less swinish. There are, of course, separate brothels for officers and for men. In thousands of other places sexuality flourishes; clandestine prostitution springs up in occupied areas; women at home consort with prisoners of war; the capital cities of nations become dens of vice; hospitals are also the scenes of many erotic affairs. Sexual expression, for large sections of the population, loses most of its inner meaning and nearly all its refinement; for many it becomes a sort of social pleasure like drinking or gambling.

All this is more or less "normal" sexuality, though there might be some argument on that point. We must also record, with all possible emphasis in a brief statement, that every conceivable perversion flourishes in war time. A nation at war is a vast pathological museum in which every unspeakable vice is to be found in quantity; not one is lacking. Nor is the release of sexuality confined to adult ages; children are involved in all sorts of behavior. Because of the involvement of children, the moral effects of war are more serious and lasting than they would otherwise be. Naturally, it is as difficult to find universals in this field as anywhere else in human society. No doubt war does all the things we have described to the sexual life; it does in fact produce an uncounted number of illegitimate unions on a low level of emotional and spiritual involvement, and it also encourages the growth of perversions. In these respects trench warfare is probably worse than other kinds of war. At the same time the frustration of sex produces a

[19] A great deal of information on this subject is contained in *The Sexual History of the World War,* by Magnus Hirshfeld (New York, The Panurge Press, 1934). In spite of serious defects which were probably not the fault of Hirshfeld or his collaborators, this book is a valuable source. The material covered is mostly the sort of thing that does not get into historical records; the behavior described is for the most part illicit and covert. Therefore the method employed by Hirshfeld is necessarily unsatisfactory, but is perhaps the best one possible for utilizing the available information. Such books, unfortunately, are often put to the use of pornography, but this one should certainly not be so regarded.

great deal of phantasy activity, and encourages the growth in some relations of what can only be called spiritual values. Many chroniclers have commented on what letters mean to the soldier; letters are their link with their homes; letters and packages from home remind them that the women whom they idealize, the "good women," their women, actually exist in flesh and blood. In return for these letters, the soldier puts his own soul on paper as far as his literary abilities permit. Whether this sort of idealization makes for subsequent happiness, however, is certainly open to question. Frustrated sex produces a literature, too; on the one level, this literature consists of obscene stories and unbelievably vulgar ditties, and on another of sentimental ballads, but mixed in with it all is a small amount of good writing.

### CHAOS OF POST-WAR PERIOD

Nearly all observers agree that the moral chaos produced by war reaches its height in the post-war period. The confusion of the post-war years was reflected in the 'twenties by thousands of books, by peculiar movements in literature, the arts, and morality, by disorganized youth, broken marriages, the growth of vices, psychic epidemics such as the dancing manias, and a thousand other no less unmistakable indices.

The moral chaos of the post-war period is almost indescribable. A distinguished historian once compared the years after 1918 to the years following the Black Death. "It is surprising to see how similar are the complaints then and now: economic chaos, social unrest, high prices, profiteering, depravation of morals, lack of production, industrial indolence, frenetic gaiety, wild expenditure, luxury, debauchery, social and religious hysteria, greed, avarice, maladministration, decay of manners." [20]

There are several reasons why the moral confusion of the post-war

[20] James Westfall Thompson, "The Aftermath of the Black Death and the Aftermath of the Great War," in *The American Journal of Sociology,* March, 1920, Vol. 26, pp. 565-72. As to the "frenetic gaiety," another historian has commented on the dancing mania as follows: "The craze for public dancing which marked the first few years after the War in many countries where a cold climate and an uncouthness of bodily construction made hopping a welcome exercise, and no one is offended by the absurdity of the spectacle, formed a horrible anticlimax to the events of 1918." (Bartholdy, Albrecht Mendelssohn, *The War and German Society, The Testament of a Liberal,* A Publication of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1937, p. 290.)

years is greater than that of the war itself. We may perhaps state these in summary form as follows:

During the war years, a rigid military control pervades the whole life of the nation, but after the war this is relaxed. One effect of military control is to engender widespread rebellion, so that when the control is removed there is a tendency to react violently in defiance of previously accepted standards.

War breeds widespread disillusionment, which reaches its highest point after some years. We have noted that in war the mores decay, being replaced by short-term hedonistic adjustments. At the same time war calls forth considerable idealism and spirit of self-sacrifice in many people, and only when this is succeeded by disillusionment does the full effect of war become apparent.

In the post-war period, the soldier returns to the civilian population, where he exerts a somewhat baleful influence. We have already described the peculiar morality by which the soldier lives, and mentioned the moral estrangement between soldiers and civilians. When war ends, the soldier, disillusioned and bitter, tries to find the road back, and does not always succeed. He knows the realities of war; he has adjusted his morality to the exigencies of war; he finds it hard to interest himself in the routine of civilian life; he misses the comradeship of the army; he has learned not to regard conventional sexual morality too seriously; all in all, the returned soldier is a disorganizing influence in society.

After a war a generation of youngsters comes to maturity which has grown up under the confused conditions of war time. This generation has usually had a sub-standard education; its family life has been disturbed; it has grown up under the disturbing influence of war hysteria. It is a generation which never quite settles down, and exerts a disquieting influence upon the whole of society.

War seriously disturbs the sex ratio. Ordinarily the mores work because most of the population can satisfy its wishes within the framework of the mores. When the sex ratio is seriously unbalanced, society is confronted with a large group of women who cannot find satisfaction within the mores. They furnish the dynamic for many new and strange moralities.

Economic disturbances of the post-war period are often more serious than those of war itself. Many of the economic changes of war are cumulative and come to a head after a period of years; if, for example,

the fiscal policy of the nation has been somewhat inflationary, there may be a post-war inflation which will be even worse than that of the war years.

Because of all these things the post-war period is a time of extreme confusion and moral chaos. The family in particular suffers by this confusion.

### WAR MARRIAGES

In war time the mating process assumes some strange forms. There follow the stories of two war marriages, neither of which would have occurred if there had been no war. Each of these marriages terminated in divorce. It should not be supposed that all war marriages are like those to be described, but each is probably typical of a fairly large group.

The man from whom this story was obtained, the husband in the case, was a professor in an eastern university. Originally he was a farm boy from the Middle West. He appears to have had a more or less typical upbringing, except that he was more or less mother fixated. He was his mother's favorite, and slept with her until he was fourteen years old.

Before the war, he acquired an appetite for education, and ultimately went into educational work. All this happened by slow stages. He went to high school, to business college, and later became a representative of the business college in soliciting students. He then went to college, and finally took his doctor's degree, and became a professor. He was recognized as a person of unusual ability, even among the rather distinguished faculty to which he belonged.

During the war, he spent two years in the service. His first participation in the war was quite idealistic, but he soon became disillusioned. He met the problems of life in the army by a reduction of personality, shedding all refinement and culture, and reducing his adjustments to the primitive level. In the service he had his first sex experiences, on a low level and not very satisfactory, but effective in overcoming his inhibitions. Naturally he lost contact with the world of culture and refinement. He had a number of rather traumatic experiences, since he was in several hard-fought engagements.

Before leaving for France, he renewed a contact with a girl in his home town whom he had known for years. There was no love affair,

but he continued to correspond with her. The girl was a friend of his mother. At some time during the war his mother died, and he appears to have transferred his affection to the girl who had been her friend.

After the war, he returned to his home community. Having idealized his home during his years in the service, he was delighted to be back with his own people. Once more he fitted into the old ways, forgetting that he had already drifted far from these practices before the war began. His mother had died, but the girl had been her friend. Evidently the girl had high status in her own group, and it seemed that she would be a suitable mate. In addition, the man was sorry for her. They talked of marriage, and in spite of the fact that the young woman could not leave her home, they were married.

Then the husband went back to his intellectual work and his prewar associations. He took up all his old friends and gradually regained his former interests. This meant that he left his wife behind, for she had to stay with her parents; he left her behind in another way also, for the group in which he came to live was one into which she could never quite fit. As it happened, he had spent just one night with her before leaving his home community.

There were many letters, and the couple looked forward to meeting at Christmas time. At Christmas she visited him; he introduced her to his friends, and saw that they were not particularly well impressed with his choice. The two worlds clashed, and they both realized it. The wife developed a partial frigidity. Their mutual coldness increased during the six months between Christmas and summer. At this time he returned home, and during the summer the couple lived together, at her home. The husband later described a series of crises, each of which left the relationship with fewer assets than it had had before. He did not like her friends, and sometimes he said so. There was some conflict on religious grounds, for the husband had drifted far from the church. A particularly bad incident occurred when she wanted to go to a dance in a nearby community and he did not. He told her to go ahead and go by herself, and she did. The husband reacted the more violently to this incident because he did not like the wife's friends anyhow. At this time occurred the first mention of divorce. It came from the wife, who had grown increasingly dissatisfied. There was another serious crisis when the husband returned to college a month early. This was in reality something of an excuse to get away from his wife, and was so interpreted by her.

The wife's father died, and there was then no reason why she should not join her husband, but she did not do so. The husband got along famously in the collegiate world, and grew more and more at home in sophisticated circles. The correspondence between husband and wife began to languish, and there was occasional mention of divorce between the couple.

All this time the wife kept expecting her husband to return home for his summer vacation. When he decided to stay in the East, she was very much hurt. From this time on, the correspondence centered around the topic of divorce. The wife at first consented, and in fact even took the lead, but later changed her mind and opposed the divorce. At this point the man met the woman who afterward became his second wife, and transferred his affections to her completely. The wife now bitterly opposed the divorce, and there was a nasty fight. The wife contested the suit, and the man was beaten. Later she got a divorce in her home state.

The man in the case contracted a second marriage, which was not wholly satisfactory. Some years later he committed suicide.

The person from whom the following story was obtained was a highly educated French woman who had become progressively alienated from her own culture and her family, and had contracted a marriage with a kindly but decidedly low-grade American soldier. It is extremely unlikely that she would have so declassed herself in France, or that the marriage would have occurred at all but for the hysteria of the war. The story is given in the following excerpts taken from her own account:

"My people were Protestant, in the most Catholic part of France. My grandmother lived in a little town in La Vendée. My father was in the shoe business, manufacturing. He lost one business through politics, and then we went to another town and started again. My father was a socialist, and would write pieces to the paper and that sort of thing.

"We moved to a small town in another department. We were the only Protestant family in the whole town. I remember how the Catholic children treated us. We used to meet the children coming home from the brothers sometimes. They would take our books and throw them on the ground, and call us names. I remember that on fête days our house would be the only house in town that was not decorated. As

people passed the house they would turn and spit toward it. The other mothers would not let their children play with my sister and me. They would call out, 'Come home now. Don't play with Yvonne.' I used to think, 'What am I? Why should they treat me like this?' I used to ask my mother, 'Why are we Protestant? Why can't we go to church like the other people?' I resented the fact that we were Protestant.

"My father was a socialist, and was always writing something or other to the radical newspaper. I remember one incident that was very important. He wrote a poem. There had been a terrible scandal about a priest and a sister who ran away together. The people all supposed they were dead. Anyhow my father wrote a song about them, and he hired some boys, who were drunk, to go around the town and sing it. I remember how angry all the people were. I thought my father might get mobbed. Everybody went in and shut their doors. Eventually my father had to leave town. Nobody would work for him.

"My father was very peculiar. He was very strict, and around the house I was never allowed to express one thought. I was afraid to say anything. I would always think, 'Oh, if I should say that!' and I would keep quiet. My people thought that I had a very cold nature. I remember once my mother said to my school teacher, 'Yvonne has a very cold nature,' and the school teacher said, 'Oh, no. Yvonne is the one who always does the little things for us around school. She does not have a cold nature at all.' I was like that. You see, my mother had a pet, my younger sister. She used to do everything for her, give her everything. I think that all that had an influence on my marriage.

"My father was very strict and he could not understand me. He could not understand that I was afraid of the dark and that I did not like cabbage. He thought I was just stubborn. My people think I have a cold nature, but I really do not. I had a strong will and all the time I lived at home I used it to combat my affections.

"There was an incident that occurred when I was about sixteen. I must tell you that in detail. There was a boy who was a friend of my father's. The boy was twenty, but in France one isn't a man at twenty. He still had to serve his time in the army. First I ought to tell you that up to the time of my marriage I was really not interested in boys. My interest was in books. I used to say that I would not marry, I would be Aunt Yvonne. My father was interested in photography, and this boy used to come to see my father to talk to him about it. I used to see

him when he came to the house, but I really never thought particularly about him. If anything he was repulsive.

"Then after some months I had a dream. I was in a beautiful city. It was a beautiful night. At first I was alone, but later this boy was there. I was sitting on a bench with him. Always before I had detested the boy, but he took my hand in this dream. When he took my hand, I received a delicious shock. The next morning when I awoke I knew that something had happened. I said, 'Robert, no, it is impossible.' But my heart began to beat right away. That evening when I saw him I realized that he too preferred me. Just a glance, and he knew and I knew.

"Nothing was said between us, but something happened later. One day he left for school and then about five minutes later I left. We met and we stood at the bottom of a little street talking. We just talked for a few minutes. Now there was where something else entered in, my father got suspicious on this particular day. He said, 'He has left, she has left,' and he was suspicious. If he had been suspicious on the previous day, there would have been nothing to it. He came out to look for me and found us at the bottom of that little street. I saw him coming and I told the boy, 'Oh, he's coming. Please go.' My father took my arm and took me to school and talked to the principal. He talked to the principal like a damned fool. He said that I should not be allowed to come home from school till the maid called for me in the afternoon.

"That night there was a terrible scene. My father accused me of all sorts of horrible things that I didn't at the time even know anything about. That night he took me up to the maid's room on the third floor. He put me there to humiliate me, you see. He took the key and locked me in the room. Every night he locked me in that room and I had hell around there. This happened in June. It lasted about two weeks that way. The poor boy realized in what a terrible situation I was at home on account of this, and he wrote me a note. Of course I had developed a terrific romance with all this, much more than I ever would have otherwise. He wrote me a note, and one evening when I was up in my room I took it out of my dress and read it. I didn't realize my father would be spying. But he was, and just as he started to come in the room I made a movement to put the note away. Of course then he knew, and he demanded to see it. That was the beginning of a furious life. Oh, it was terrible.

"My father chased me. He said, 'In two weeks I want you to be gone.' And I said, 'In two weeks I will be gone.' I went to my English teacher, and confided in her that my father had said I must leave home. It happened that a relative of hers had just written her asking if she knew of some young girl who could take a position in a school in a town near by. So I wrote and we arranged that I was to take the place. When I got ready to go my father did not want me to go. He said, 'Yvonne, don't go.' And I said, 'Father, you told me to go, and I'm going.' So the night before I was to go my father said, 'I'll go with you in the morning.' I said, 'No.' I arranged for a cab to come for me in the morning. I didn't know why he was going with me, and I thought he was being very nice. I soon found out why he was going along. He got out at every station and looked around the platform, and I knew then what he went along with me for. I had written the school and had got a letter from them, and still he thought that that boy was going to get on the train. My father took me to the school and then went home.

"I had been anxious to get away from home, and yet I was dreadfully unhappy when I got away. I was very homesick. I can see now how all this prepared for my coming over here. My birthday came in February, and to show you how romantic the boy was, he threw a bouquet over our fence at home. Yes, of course, I was not there, but I thought it was a beautiful gesture all the same. I received a telegram and then a letter from home, a terrible letter. My father said I was ruining my mother's and sister's reputation. . . . [A break in the narrative. In the interim she came home and took up her studies again.]

"The war came. The boy enlisted. My father said, 'Oh, he's a fighter, is he?' The boy asked me to write to him. I said, 'I'll ask my father.' Father said, 'You write to him.' So I wrote to him. When his letters came, my father read them first and then handed them to me. Then he came home, and was in the hospital there in town, ill and wounded. I asked my father if I could go and see him and my father said, 'Once.' I went to see him, there in the hospital, but when he got well and was able to be around my father would not allow him to come to the house. He forbade him the house, or rather, made it so unpleasant that he couldn't stay. I had to break with him. I asked him for my letters, and he brought them back. My mother made me burn all his letters to me. There was a bad scene with his mother. She came over and said, 'You'll be the cause of my son's death.' He had gone off to war again,

and he was barely able to walk. He was not well and did not have to go. He had been getting around on crutches. Well, he was wounded again, and after the war he just went to pieces. Finally he committed suicide.

"My father hurt me by crushing lots of ideas I had concerning life. What he did not realize was that I was not then ready for love, that kind of love. I was up in the clouds all the time. That began as a dream, and it ended as a dream.

"A year after this happened the Americans began to come and a young girl whom I knew took me and my sister with her and her mother to see them. They were a curiosity then, you know. This young girl, her name was Madeleine, was very much interested in English, and she wanted to talk with the Americans. Well, we went down to the beach and sat down. Three boys came along, a marine and two others. We were sitting on a bench not far from where they sat down. They were studying a French book, and we watched them and pretty soon we began to giggle. Well, pretty soon one of them came over and asked us how to pronounce such and such a phrase. We began to talk, and the other two boys came over too. We had dinner with Madeleine and her mother, and then afterwards took a walk with the soldiers.

"Right away my girl friend, Madeleine, was in love with the young man that was with her. The next week, without saying anything to anybody, she and I came back alone, and waited on the beach. Pretty soon one of the men that we had been with came along, riding. It was George, the one that had been with me. Well, we talked a while, and took a long walk along the boulevard. We had to take the train home at seven-fifty. It was a local train and it was the last one. We got to the station just as the train was pulling out. As we came out of the station, there were the men we had just left. There were some French soldiers standing around; they said, 'Oh, you've missed the train. Now you have to stay all night in the hotel with the American soldiers.' Well, we could have stayed all night in the hotel by ourselves but we decided to walk home. It was only six kilometers.

"The two boys spoke up and said, 'We'll take you home,' and we said, 'Oh, no.' They were American boys and were used to taking girls home, of course. I was very frightened because I knew what my father would say if he found all this out. Well, the boys took us home, down

the railroad tracks, so as to dodge the camp of Negro soldiers who were in town. And, I must say, George was a perfect gentleman. He said later that he had begun to love me when he saw how frightened I was, because then he knew what sort of girl I was. That evening I began to have confidence in him, which was a great deal. . . . [Several clandestine meetings are then described.]

"Oh, I did not tell you how my heart first went out to him. After that Sunday we arranged that the next morning, at eleven o'clock before he went at twelve, we should meet and take a little walk. I cut my English class and had a walk and a long talk with him. I remember as we were standing there I said, 'George, how old is your mother?' and he said, 'I haven't any mother,' in a very sad tone of voice. I remember my heart went out to him then. I thought, 'Poor boy, he hasn't any mother.' I wanted to put my arms around him right then. That was characteristic of all my life with my husband.

"Well, we kept up correspondence. I did not see him then for a year. One year later, he asked me to marry him. I said he would have to ask my father. He wrote my father a letter. When the letter came, my father came home that evening and said, 'Well, I got a queer letter today. A very queer letter. From an American man. I guess that's the way we handle those letters, eh?'" (He tore the letter in two and threw it into the wastebasket.) "I said, 'Oh, father, you'll answer it.' He shook his head. . . .

"My father was opposed to him of course. Finally he made me swear not to write to him any more. We had been writing every day. Every day when his letter came a little affection came into my life, and I was so starved for affection. I finally agreed to write to him asking him not to write me any more. I was staying at home then during the vacation but I felt that I was not welcome. I went upstairs to write him and I heard my mother talking downstairs. She was saying, 'Yvonne is home now on vacation. Surely she ought to pay something for her board.' I thought, 'My mother.' Right away I was like this, one big revolt. I thought, I am giving up the man I love just to please them. And for what, for what? My mother wants me to pay board.' And my parents were certainly not in need of money. I tore up the letter to George and wrote him another one asking him when he could get married. I went downstairs and told my parents what I was doing. I went back to school.

"I wrote my father a long letter, twenty-six pages, and told him everything that I had been wanting to tell him. I told him all about the way I had been treated at home by him and by my mother. I told him all about the way my mother had favored my sister. You see, when I was born my mother was very young and was not yet ready to care for a child. So she sent me off to a wet nurse, and I stayed with her for eighteen months, no, I guess it must have been nearer to two years, and my mother did not see me, I mean she saw me only occasionally. But when my sister was born it was a different story. She nursed her. So she used to take my sister on her lap and say, 'Oh, you're my child. You are really mine. I had your first smiles.' And she would hug her and kiss her and I would be there, just dying for a little kiss. Always it was my sister. And I told my father about his part of it, too. I said, 'And as for you, father,' and told him all the things he had done to make it hard for me.

"My father was very much impressed, not with what I said about him, not with his part of it, but with what I said about my mother. He had not known about that. So he got drunk, and went home, and nearly killed her. I mean with words. He laid her out. She wondered what it was all about and when he went to sleep she got the letter out of his pocket. Well, you can imagine how she felt toward me. For three months from that time I couldn't set foot in the house."

After some difficulties with the French law, the two were then married and came to America. The husband proved to be completely incapable of earning a living for a wife and baby; he had had only a very rudimentary education, and could do only semi-skilled labor; and in addition would not stick to any job. He was totally without culture or refinement; he had no intellectual resources; in Yvonne's words, she found him empty. Yvonne related this part of the story in the following words:

"My father finally gave in and we set the date for the wedding. On the day before we were to be married George had not yet got the final paper. It came all right and we were married. After our marriage we lived at home for eleven days. Then he went back. I went to Brest. I was in the camp there with all the war brides. Some of them were terrible creatures, but some were very nice.

"When we came over we spent a week in New York. George didn't know whether he would be demobilized at once or not. He was and

we came to Philadelphia and lived a month with his sister. All this time George was lovely to me. I was very happy. I centered my whole life on him. He was everything that I had. I was in a strange country. Just before he was to come I would sit at the window and watch for him. When I saw him my heart would jump.

"Well, I became pregnant. We were terribly poor that winter. We had spent what little money we had. And my husband did not work. We took an apartment on P—— Street. It was a terrible place, an old dilapidated house. I was terribly depressed there. George should have known I was not used to that. We moved from there and went to live with his cousin on D—— Street. It was the happiest time of my life. It was a very nice place. Just a workingman's home, but very comfortable.

"My husband was adorable to me. Never a cross word, and I never had a cross word for him. The baby was born at the hospital, and I almost died. I had complications . . .

"We moved over to his sister's. Oh, those two years! All she could talk about was a doctor or a minister, hospitals and deaths. I used to translate newspapers into French. You see, I was in America as if amputated. I was away from my people, and away from books. Books had been my life before. After the baby was born I had a rage. I wanted food for my mind. I wanted something to do, and I still have my old *cahiers* in which I translated from the newspapers. George used to ask me why I was doing that. I would tell him I would rather do that than anything else in the world. But I didn't even learn about getting books from the library for some time.

"My husband's trade? Ah, that's the thing. You know what his background was? He had left school when he was eleven years old. He had just drifted around the world, and done a little of everything. I will always have affection for him. I suppose I dominated him. The best part of myself I have given him and I cannot take it back. I never gave him cross words. I'll tell you how long I was happy. My happiness rested on the fact that when I first came over here I was helpless. My husband was the one who knew things and I was in this strange country. I did not know English well enough to know what kind of English he was speaking.

"That second year I went home on a visit. When I got back into the old environment I realized what a change it had been. I still had affec-

tion for him, though. All the way over on the boat I was thinking, 'Oh, what I shall feel when I see him,' but when I met him I felt—absolutely nothing. It was that way that night, too. He asked me, 'Yvonne, what is the matter?' I could not tell him. I said, 'It is because I am so happy to see you.' The next day I realized that he had not been working. I thought, 'Well, if he won't work, I will.' I wanted to teach."

After struggling for some years, Yvonne was able to support both herself and her husband. By this time she had become rather thoroughly alienated from him. She described her attitude toward him at this time as follows:

"The next year I did better, but I found that the more I made the less my husband worked. In addition I found my husband empty. He was nice, but dreadfully empty. I began to think I could not be his wife. I explained to him that I could not. I would rather go out on the street and give myself to the first stranger than live with him and once in a great while, just from pure passion, give in to him. I just could not stand to see it that way. He could not understand, of course. In January I told him. He would not believe me, because he knew how I loved him. I do not regret that I loved him."

Shortly after this time she divorced her husband. She assumed full responsibility for the support of her child. She remained in America, since her livelihood was there.

### THE INSTABILITY OF POST-WAR MARRIAGES

There seems to be good statistical evidence for the view that marriages contracted in war time or the post-war period are exceptionally unstable. Calvin Hall has demonstrated this on the basis of American figures for the World War of 1914-1918.[21] The years 1919 and 1920 appear to have been especially ill-fated for marital happiness. For at least eleven years thereafter marriages contracted in these years revealed a disproportionate number of divorces. The evidence is so consistent that there can be little doubt of its meaning: Marriages contracted in the post-war period are in fact unstable. Marriages contracted in 1917, 1918, and 1921 showed the same characteristics in less pronounced form.

Hall offers a rather ingenious explanation of his figures: "The most

[21] Calvin Hall, "The Instability of Post-War Marriages," *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. V, pp. 523-530.

plausible one is that the unstable post-war marriages were an effect of the war itself. The argument for this hypothesis can be developed as follows: During a war-time period and especially when there is more or less universal conscription among certain age ranges, many young men and women who would normally contract marriage are forced to delay this act. Such a delay period, spent in partial segregation between the sexes, serves to intensify the normal desire to participate in matrimony and this intensified desire has the effect of reducing even the customary rationality which men and women display when they agree to contract marriage. Furthermore, the hysteria attendant upon the close of a major conflict undoubtedly acts as another inhibitor of rational processes. There is also a third factor operating to make for unstable marriages as a result of war. Presumably many couples anticipating a delay agreed to and did marry as soon as the war was over. War is, however, a notable breeder of personality and physical changes and many of those engaged couples who had been compatible before the war were so changed, psychologically and physically, that there was no longer any compatibility. And yet because they felt bound by their previous betrothals they entered into an unsatisfactory connubial relationship. Thus heightened desire, post-war hysteria, and personality or physical changes, operating singly or together, can account for the instability of post-war marriages."

Hall's analysis seems essentially correct as far as it goes. The present writer, having a more sociological conception of the mating process, would be inclined to stress somewhat more the relaxation of social and personal controls and the consequent mismatings which occur during a war. The two cases given above lend some support to this view. Except for the war, neither of these marriages could possibly have occurred. In addition, the previous analysis of the moral chaos of the post-war period seems to furnish some relevant insight. All this is not to say that the psychological mechanisms stressed by Hall are not also operative.

### WAR AND SECULAR TRENDS

We have now had a brief glimpse of the changes which war produces in the family. We have seen how the dislocations of war force many millions to live outside the family; how war encourages violations of the mores and engenders a decay of the entire moral structure; how it produces strange mismatings and detracts from the sta-

bility of the family institution; how it causes a generation of children to grow up under circumstances which make neither for sound personality nor stable morality; we have seen how war ends in the indescribable chaos of the post-war period.

For most persons, these effects of war will seem altogether regrettable. The apologist for war, however, might point out that many of the alterations of the family structure in war time are changes which war does not so much produce as accelerate; these changes have been going on for a long time and war merely speeds them up. Such a person might even argue that war is a desirable thing because it increases the tempo of social change and brings us in a few years changes which might otherwise have to wait for generations. Let us attempt to evaluate this statement.

It is quite true that many of the changes of the family structure produced by the War of 1914-1918 had been in process long before the war, and that the war apparently hastened them. There were signs of decay in the bourgeois family before 1914; it crumbled rapidly during the war years, but it would have changed in time anyhow. We have been moving toward a less stable form of family organization for generations; it is probable that the war merely accelerated this tendency. Likewise the tendency toward the emancipation of women was merely accentuated by war and not created by it. Similarly, before the war we were changing our sex morality and slowly working out a new consensus concerning venereal disease.

With regard to all these points, we must concede that the War of 1914-1918 merely accelerated a long-term trend. Granting that these changes in the mores were for the most part desirable adaptations to changed conditions of life, we still can make no case for war as a mode of social change.

The first and most obvious consideration against war as a mode of changing the family structure is the needless expense of the thing; if the house burns down and there happens to be a pig in it, then it is only sensible to eat the pig, but it would be foolish to go about burning houses in order to get roast pig. Yet we may even doubt that the moral changes of war, coming as they do, are really a social gain; it may be that these changes are ultimately desirable, but they come too fast in war time; they are too sharp and sudden and drastic, and society cannot control them nor the individual adjust his mind to them.

The penalty, therefore, of such changes is confusion in society and mental conflict in the individual, in brief, human misery.[22] A third point is that war is far more productive of violations of the mores than of new mores. It is difficult, even with the most minute scrutiny of the evidence, to find any social gain in most war-time violations of the mores.

In addition to all this, there is the fact that many war-time changes of family behavior are such as not even a lunatic would justify or defend. The breakdown in the transmission of the culture heritage produces a disorganized generation of youngsters, a generation which has failed to absorb large segments of the culture—post-war youth. As we have seen, perverse modes of sexual expression flourish during and after a war; it would require peculiar logic to regard these as in any sense a social gain. These are in no sense adaptive changes, and we may safely say that they do not further human happiness. In sum, the verdict with regard to the effect of war upon the family would be that it is not a favorable effect from any point of view.

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[22] The view that war-induced changes involve such confusion as to be ultimately somewhat undesirable is corroborated by a recent study by Elizabeth Nottingham, of the position of English women as affected by the War of 1914-1918. We quote a summary paragraph of this study: "It is the thesis of this paper, however, that war-hastened change brought about a sort of lop-sided development that contributed to disturbance, confusion, and ambivalence as to the feminine role in our culture. In women's relations, as in other relationships after the war, a great deal of institutional readjustment became necessary, and in the process of readjustment there was discomfort. In particular, the general loosening of the mores that followed on the heels of the war adversely affected the security of women in their family status. Since the greater number of women are primarily affected by their security, or the lack of it, in their family relationships, any loss of security there is, on the total balance, but inadequately compensated for by the post-war gains of women as independent individuals legally and politically, perhaps even economically!" (Elizabeth Nottingham, unpublished paper, "The Position of English Women and the War of 1914-1918.")

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